

Good afternoon, my name is Parker Terrell, and I'm a senior undergraduate student with the University of Connecticut, where I major in Urban and Community Studies, and for the past academic year, have had the opportunity to intern for the non-profit organization, True Colors.

True Colors is an organization that directly impacts and advocates for countless numbers of LGBTQIA+ identified youth, not just here in Connecticut, but across the nation, and I am here today to ask you to pass proposed bill, H.B. No. 7006--AN ACT CONCERNING BIRTH CERTIFICATE AMENDMENTS, in order to help modernize the process of amending one's birth certificate so that it is easier for those who identify within the trans community, as well as, make available the ability to change one's gender marker, for those who choose not to undergo surgery, or do not have the financial means to do so. Currently Connecticut's standard for correcting gender markers on birth certificates is not supported by contemporary medical views, or the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH), and it would be an injustice to those within this community and our state to not modernize this process.

While today, I am speaking as an advocate for those in the trans community on behalf of True Colors; I would like to share my own story of what being transgender has been like for me. Twenty-one years ago my parents gave birth to what doctor's told them was a healthy baby girl. Almost nineteen years later going into my sophomore year of college, I called both of my parents up on the phone crying, telling them about how I needed to go to therapy, because I could no longer look in the mirror and not see that the body I had grown into, did not reflect the

person I knew myself to be. My parents did not understand or support my decision to transition in the beginning, because in all honesty, they simply didn't know what transitioning would entail, but through a lot of self advocacy and persistence, both of my parents and the rest of my family and friends took the time to educate themselves and to trust in me that I knew that transitioning into a man is what I needed to lead a successful and happy life. Transitioning has been the hardest decision I've had to make, but also the most rewarding, because I have had the unique opportunity to experience life through two genders, and have had the ability to explore and find what fits best for me, as well as help advocate for others in my community.

I currently have not had the opportunity to change my gender marker on my birth certificate, and can speak from first hand experience when saying that it makes for a challenging first impression with a potential new employer when I am forced to disclose my gender identity before they get to know me as an individual, because all of my paper work does not reflect me or my gender.

Transitioning medically also is not cheap. In regards to sex confirming surgeries, this past July I was able to have my top surgery done in Massachusetts, but my insurance did not cover any of the expenses. My parents and I had to pay just over \$8,250 to have the procedure done, and I also had to leave work for over a month and a half in order to recover. Again I am in support of the passing of House Bill No. 7006, because not everybody in the transgender community chooses to undergo surgery in their transition, or has the financial stability or support to afford surgery, and without this amendment we are neglecting to include those in these

situations, to have the opportunity to amend their birth certificate, and have documentation that reflects their true self.

I'd like to thank you all for this opportunity to stand before you and share my story.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Parker Terrell